

The Avalanche

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GRAYLING, MICHIGAN.

CONTENTMENT.

My content, 'Tis triumph's tone
My song like people know!
And many a weary man, with throne
And scepter, is not so.
And if he is, why then I cry,
The man is just the same as I.
The Mogul's gold, the Sultan's show,
The hero's bliss, who, vexed
To find no more of the world below,
Ruled his enormous world next—
I would not have it, things like that
Are only fit for laughing at.
My motto is—content with this;
Content is power of such.
That which I have, my measure is;
I wish no more desire to touch,
Men wish and wish to have their will,
And wish again—ah, hungry still.
And gold or honor, though it rings,
Is but as little glass;
The dust of things of things
Shows that as it doth pass,
Off changing may it come,
And giving honor a short run.
To do right, to be good and clear,
Is more than rank or gold;
There are those who of good cheer,
And whose last end is sold.
Then art thou with thyself at one,
And no man hating, forget none.
I am content, 'Tis triumph's tone,
My song like people know,
And many a mighty man, with throne
And scepter, is not so;
And if he is, why then I cry,
The man is just the same as I.

A RISE IN KIOMATIA.

My health making it necessary for me to give up my clerkship, I obtained a situation as wagon-driver to Spencer Academy.

This, one of the two boarding-schools of the Choctaw nation, is situated in the heart of the woods, about twenty-five miles north of Red river, and fifty from the railroad.

To reach Paris, Texas—the base of supplies—it is necessary to cross two rivers—Red river, and Kiamitia—in the Territory. These rivers are sometimes fordable, but more frequently must be crossed by a ferry.

They both—but particularly Kiamitia—are subject to sudden rises, probably caused by the bursting of water-spouts in the mountains. These rises, are frequently attended with loss of life and property.

I had been at Spencer but a few weeks, when it became necessary to send to Paris. Two wagons were sent—Ernest Black, a young man, driving one, my self the other. I had been intimate with him in Texas, but had lost sight of him since his coming to the Nation, some years before.

We started from Spencer early in the morning, intending to make our noon-day halt at Kiamitia, twelve miles on the way. The road crosses the river obliquely, so that it is 200 yards from where it goes down into the stream to where it emerges again with high steep banks on each side.

Midway of the river, when it is low, is a flat, sandy island. I proposed to Black that we would stop here to lunch, as the water would be convenient for our teams.

"No," said he, "I tried that once, and will never do it again."

Then, seeing my look of inquiry, he added:

"Wait until we get on the other bank, where there is a good spring, and, while our teams are eating, I will tell you why I have such a dread of that island."

So, while our mules were lingering over their fodder, he gave me the following story of his experience with Kiamitia:

"Two years ago I first began driving for Spencer. I had been in the Nation for several years, and knew the country pretty well, but was not aware of the sudden changes in this river. It was, I think, my third trip to Paris. Kiamitia had been low all summer, and no one thought of a rise. A young lady—Miss Ellen Cotter—had been to Spencer on a visit, and was desirous of returning home. As her home lay directly on my road, I offered her a seat in my wagon, which she accepted. I was in love with her then—she is my wife now—and of course was glad of the opportunity of a long ride and talk with her."

"We started out on much such a day as this, just cool enough to make the sun pleasant. When we reached Kiamitia, I stopped on that island to lunch. Hoosened the traces of my team, threw the mules a bundle of fodder, and then helped Ellen out of the wagon."

"We sat there chatting and eating for a half-hour, and they began to get ready to start. It seemed to me that the island was considerably larger when we stopped. On looking more closely, I found that the river was rising rapidly. Still I was not alarmed, but a little uneasy. But I lost no time. I put Ellen into the wagon, hitched up the traces and got on my saddle-mule."

"By this time, the water began to come down in waves, and before we left the island it was hub-deep. With a look of encouragement to Ellen, I slithered to my team and, plunged in. I urged on my mules all I could, but the river was getting deeper fast, and it was soon over the fore-wheels. Mules do not like to go fast through water, and, in spite of my effort, we made slow progress. But we were finally very near the bank, and I thought we would make it all right."

"Just as my leaders were beginning to go out of the water, a scream from Ellen startled me. I looked around and saw to my terror that the water had lifted the wagon-bed out of the standards, and it was rapidly drifting down stream."

"Giving a piercing shout to my team,

I plunged into the river, thinking I could easily catch the bed and guide it to the bank; but I had underestimated both the depth and the force of the stream. I was swept off my feet in a moment and had to swim for it."

"I tried to push the wagon-bed along, swimming behind it, but neither was this possible, the force of the stream was too great. I soon found I was getting exhausted, and climbed into the wagon-bed. Ellen was much frightened, but calm. I reassured her to some extent, by telling her there was no danger, though far from feeling safe myself."

"Two principal dangers presented themselves. First, that we would sink; secondly, that the drift, which by this time was coming down in considerable quantities, would crush the frail wagon-bed."

"On the first score I thought there was but little danger, as the wagon was almost water-tight. The second danger seemed more serious. There was a stiff breeze blowing up stream, which kept us back, while large logs, having less surface exposed and running deeper, drifted faster, and kept running against us, and every now and then gave us a severe shock."

"I seized a pole which was floating by, and managed to keep off some of them, though not all. I also tried to steer our novel craft toward the bank, but it was as unmanageable as a ferry-boat. The current, for the most part, kept us in the middle of the stream, though every now and then we would run close to the bank, just out of reach of the branches which hung down so temptingly."

"I knew there was a ferry about thirty miles below us, where we would be stopped if we could keep afloat until we reached it. There were also houses along the bank, but too far off for my voice to have reached them, even could the inmates have helped us."

"I was but a poor swimmer; Ellen could not swim at all, or I would have been tempted to leave the wagon-bed, and make an attempt to reach the bank. Naturally, too, we wished to stay in the wagon as long as possible. It seemed a barrier, though a frail one, between us and the seething waters."

"I began to find the water was coming in much faster than before. The house of the drift had opened the seams, and it soon became necessary to bail it out. To do this, I had nothing but my hat, and it kept me busy, as I was often obliged to stop and ward off some large log which threatened to swamp us."

"While thus engaged, my eyes fell upon something which gave me a gleam of hope. This was the rope which I had seen carried in the wagon in case of accidents."

"You know I used to be a good hand at throwing the lasso, and my knack had not entirely left me. I thought I might be able to throw the rope around some limb or log, and by that means draw the boat to the bank. Ellen, meanwhile, had been standing in one end of the wagon-bed—it was too wet to make sitting comfortable—and as I could see from her earnest face and folded hands, praying, I hoped for me as well as herself."

"Giving my hat to her and asking her to continue bailing, I made the rope into a lasso. As soon as the current carried us near enough to the bank, I began throwing. My first attempt was to throw it on a cottonwood limb. In this I was successful, and, as the rope tightened in my hands, I felt a wild thrill of exultation. I thought we were saved; but, just as we began to near the bank, an enormous log came floating down the stream, which we both failed to see. It came down with such force that, as I held on with the grip of despair, the brittle limb parted and dropped into the water. I was discouraged, but thought I could easily throw the rope over another. But my expectations were in vain. I threw again and again, trying sometimes the end of a limb, sometimes a sapling, sometimes a stump; but the swiftness of the stream, with the force of the wind, rendered all my efforts ineffectual. Probably, too, the peril we were in confused my brain."

"Again was I whirled into the middle of the stream, and I went to bailing. The last shock had been almost too much for the frail craft, and bailing out with the hat could no longer keep down the water. Woman's wit came to our aid. Ellen, taking off the short cloak she wore, contrived to pin it into a shape which would hold water. Between us, we managed to keep the water from getting any deeper in the bed, though we could not lower it any; but it was apparent we could not keep afloat much longer."

"I had hunted on this part of the river before, and knew that there was one place where the lasso could probably be used with advantage. This was where there was an old clearing on the bank of the stream, thickly studded with stumps. The river had eaten into the bank, until some of these stood quite at the water's edge; though at low water considerably above the stream."

"I knew we must be nearly level with the now, I thought that here we would be swept near the bank, and determined to make my last trial there. Should it fail I would take Ellen in my arms, and make a desperate effort to reach the bank."

"Soon we came in sight of the clearing, and I prepared again to throw. But the current had changed since I had been there, and the stream swept us out of reach of the bank. My rope was long enough; but heavy at any time, its weight was doubled by its being wet, and my utmost efforts could not throw it far enough."

"I threw time and again, nearly throwing it over a stump sometimes, but always falling a little short. We soon ran by the clearing, and but one chance was left us."

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seemed left to us. The wagon-bed was fast filling and would soon sink, whether we left it or not."

"I looked at Ellen, and in that supreme moment each read in the other's eyes the love as yet unspoken between us. With the whispered words, 'Darling, if I cannot save you I will die with you,' I clasped her in my arms, and was just preparing to plunge into the river when her dear voice said:

"Wait!"

"As she spoke she pointed at a large cottonwood tree, which was drifting rapidly down stream at an angle with the current, and nearly on us."

"This only seemed to me a reason for greater haste, particularly as our sinking craft had been caught in an eddy of the stream and was almost stationary. Again I started to plunge in, and again she restrained me. She told me afterward she had an instinctive belief that the log would save us."

"So, indeed, it proved. It drifted nearer the bank, until one end ran against it, and on this, as a pivot, it swung around, inclining us between it and the bank."

"The log came with such rapidity that I feared we would be crushed. But, before it reached us, the long branches began to drag on the bottom, and it came more slowly. Soon it struck the wagon-bed, and bore us slowly, but steadily, toward the bank. In a few moments more it grounded, and I leaped out with Ellen and made my way up the bank."

"Not a second too soon. Scarcely were we out on dry land when the tree became dislodged and drifted down the river, carrying our boat with it. This went barely fifty yards before it sank, just as we turned at the top of the bank to get a last glimpse of it."

"We made our way to a house a few miles distant, where we obtained dry clothing. I hired a horse and went after my team. The mules were well trained and had kept the road, until passing a house, where the owner knew them, they had been stopped. The people were just organizing a search for me when I rode up."

"Since then, whenever I have to cross deep water, I have always tied down the wagon-bed, and I never stopped on the island in Kiamitia again."

TOM MARSHALL'S SECRET.
"Tom Marshall, Richard Menifee and Frank Hunt were all brilliant men," continued Gov. Magoffin, as the conversation drifted in that direction. "Hunt came nearer being the equal of Clark than any man I ever knew. He was a wonderful man, Marshall had a wider reputation, perhaps. He was a singular compound. They talk about my astonishing bursts of eloquence," he said to me one day, "and doubtless imagine that it is my genius bubbling over. It is nothing of the sort. I tell you how I do it. I select a subject, and study it from the ground up. When I have mastered it fully I write a speech on it. Then I take a walk and come back and revise and correct. In a few days I submit it to another printing and then recopy it. Next I add the finishing touches, round it off with graceful periods and commit it to memory. Then I speak it in the fields, in my father's lawn, and before my mirror until gesture and delivery are perfect. It sometimes takes me six weeks or two months to get up a speech. When I have one prepared I come to town and go to drinking. I generally select a court day when there is sure to be a crowd."

"I am not on a speech and am permitted to select my own subject. I seize hold on to the banister or railing and confirm the impression that I am very drunk and speak my piece. If it astonishes the people, as I intended it should, and they go away marveling at my amazing power of oratory. They call it genius, but it represents the hardest kind of work. This was the way Marshall would make his intimates, and I have no doubt he was telling the truth. Yet, with all his vanity and faults, he was a man of unquestioned ability and intellectual power of the highest and brightest standard."—Harrodsburg (Ky.) letter in Chicago Times.

USES OF CHARCOAL.
Charcoal, laid flat, while cold, on a burn, causes the pain to abate immediately; by leaving it on for an hour, the burn seems almost healed, when it is superficial. And charcoal is valuable for many other purposes. Tainted meat, surrounded with it, is sweetened; strewn over heaps of decomposed pets, or over dead animals, it prevents an unpleasant odor. Foul water is purified by it. It is a great disinfectant, and sweetens the air if placed in trays around apartments. It is so very porous in its "minute interior" it absorbs and condenses gases most rapidly. One cubic inch of fresh charcoal will absorb nearly 100 of gases of ammonia. Charcoal forms an unrivaled poultice for malignant wounds and sores, often corroding away dead flesh, reducing it one-quarter in six hours. In cases of what we call pruritis, it is invaluable. It gives no disagreeable odor, corrodes no metal, hurts no texture, injures no color, is a simple and safe sweetener and disinfectant. A teaspoonful of charcoal in half a glass of water often relieves a sick headache; it absorbs the gases and relieves the distended stomach, pressing against the nerves, which extend from the stomach to the head.

THE SNEAKY TALKER.
Conversation is a very serious thing with some people. They talk all day, and the fact that they say nothing does not in the slightest degree interfere with the steady flow of words. One of this sort on board the train was asked a very simple question by a fellow-passenger. She made a deprecating gesture and replied: "Excuse me, sir, but I am only going to the next station, and it's not worth while to begin a conversation."

LANDED PROPERTY OF ENGLISH STATESMEN.
As a test of the personal concern which members of the Government have in land laws, it is interesting to note the possessions of some of them. Mr. Gladstone is the proprietor of 7,000 acres; the Marquis of Hartington is heir to 200,000 acres; Earl Spencer owns 27,000; Earl Kimberley, 11,000; Lord Northbrook, 10,000; Mr. Dodson, 30,000; Lord Huntley, 90,000; other members have lesser estates, and Mr. Bright is the only prominent man in the Cabinet who has no landed possessions in fee worth mentioning. The Duke of Argyll, who has retired, owns 175,000 acres, but his rental is a little more than a fourth of the Duke of Devonshire's.

PHYSICAL VIGOR AS A CURE FOR DIS-EASE.
Physical vigor is the basis of all moral and bodily welfare; and a chief condition of permanent health. Like manly strength and female purity, gymnastics and temperance should go hand in hand. An effeminate man is half sick; without the stimulus of physical exercise, the complex-organism of the human body is liable to disorders which abstinence and chastity can only partly counteract. By increasing the action of the circulatory system, athletic sports promote the elimination of effete matter and quicken all the vital processes till languor and dyspepsia disappear like rust from a busy plowshare. "When I reflect on the immunity of hardworking people from the effects of wrong and overfeeding," says Dr. Boerhaave, "I cannot help thinking that most of our fashionable diseases might be cured mechanically, instead of chemically, by climbing a bitterwood tree or chopping it down, if you like, rather than swallowing a decoction of its disgusting leaves." The medical philosopher, Asclepiades, Pliny tells us, has found that health could be preserved and, if lost, restored—by physical exercise alone, and not only discarded the use of internal remedies, but made a public declaration that he would forfeit all claim to the title of a physician if he should ever fall sick or die but by violence or extreme old age. Asclepiades kept his word, for he lived upward of a century, and died from the effects of an accident. He used to prescribe a course of gymnastics for every form of bodily ailment, and the same physis might be successfully applied to certain moral disorders—incontinence, for instance, and the incipient stages of the alcohol habit. It would be a remedy ad principium, curing the symptoms by removing the cause, for some of the besetting vices of youth can with certainty be ascribed to an excess of that potential energy which finds no outlet in the functions of our sedentary mode of life. In large cities parents owe their children a provision for a frequent opportunity of active exercise, as they owe them an antiseptic diet in a malarious climate.—Dr. Osmond, in Popular Science Monthly.

CIRCULATION OF MATTER.
Notwithstanding the constant return of plant and animal to the parent earth, all the mineral matter they contain does not remain where they are deposited. Rains and rivers daily remove from the soil a portion of the materials which are so essential to the perpetuation of animal and vegetable forms, and transport them to the sea. Thus the natural store of mineral food becomes daily smaller, and the land in consequence less fitted for the growth of plants. But for this contingency also there is a provision. The solid rocks which form the crust of the earth contain all these essential forms of inorganic matter in minute proportion. As these rocks crumble and mingle with the soil they yield constant supplies of each ingredient—of phosphoric acid, lime, magnesia, etc., etc. These supplies, which find their way to the surface from above or from beneath, dissolve and diffuse wherever they go. Thus, in many localities, a moderate supply is day by day brought to the surface to replace that which, by natural causes, is constantly removed. And the great service which this work of restoration. They leave their lofty waves into the air, and break in foam, that the rough wind may take up and bear back again to the land a portion of the salty spoils which the rivers are ever enriching them. And then, lest these small daily restorations should not succeed in perpetually maintaining the necessary richness of the soil in mineral plant-food, periods of convulsions come at last to their aid. Great physical revolutions from time to time intervene. Now all at once and now by slow degrees, the bottom of the sea becomes dry. Land and water change places, as they have often done during the geological history of the globe; and forthwith begin to take up what rivers and rains have carried down into former sea-beds. The same mineral matter begins to play over again the same part as before in the constant succession of animal and vegetable life. In this we see another long cycle, through which certain ingredients of the solid earth are ever slowly moving.

WEBSTER AND THE STAGE DRIVER.
Daniel Webster, traveling, laid the night stage from Baltimore to Washington, with no companion save the driver, and contemplated that worthy's forbidding visage with a very uneasy mind. He had nearly reasoned 23 suspicious fears away, when they came to the dark woods between Bladensburg and Washington, when Mr. Webster felt the courage oozing out of his finger-ends as he thought what a fitting place it was for a murder. Suddenly the driver turned toward him and, roughly demanded his name. It was given. Then he wanted to know where he was going. "To Washington. I am a Senator," said Daniel, expecting his first thoughts were near realization. The driver grasped him by the hand, saying: "I've glad I am, master, to hear that. I have been badly scared for the last hour, for, when I looked at you, I felt sure you was a highwayman."

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AN HISTORIC CONGRESS.

Closing Scene of the Thirty-third Congress—The Birthplace of the Republican Party.

(From the National Republican.)
The recording angel over the hall clock of the old House of Representatives never entered on her dusty record of Congressional events a more notable or impressive scene than was witnessed there on the night and morning of the 4th of March, 1855. The Thirty-third Congress of the United States was drawing rapidly to a close. Great events were staring the nation in the face. The old Democratic party, that so long wielded absolute sway over the destinies of the republic, was silently melting away before the grand influences of that mighty wave of human freedom and national intelligence. On that night the great Democratic party held its final levee to the world. On that night North and South shook hands and parted, never more to meet as friends. It was just a quarter of a century since we stood in the ladies' gallery, looking down at the sea of heads that moved restlessly to and fro over the carpeted floor, and heard the echoing voices of the speakers, as they pressed incessantly each amendment of the Civil and Diplomatic bill, occasionally pausing to enter into a rambling discussion that was soon checked by the presiding officer. Let us return to the old House and glance at the scene as it appeared on that 4th of March, 1855. The scene is an imposing one—the brilliantly lighted hall, the galleries on both sides crowded to suffocation by an immense army of femininities, and the noise and confusion on the floor of Congress reminds one of a party caucus rather than a dignified body of our nation's legislators. South Carolina, Spain and Bonaparte for session, has her fit representatives in Preston B. Brooks and Lawrence M. Keitt. They are conversing earnestly together, while John C. Breckinridge, negligently reclining in his chair, is a theatrically sharpened pocket penknife on his boot-heel. Wm. H. English, with no ambitious dreams of the Vice Presidency, is sitting apparently in his constitutional while Thomas A. Hendricks, undisturbed by the phantom of a Tilden, is gazing on the scene, the picture of dignified serenity. Calvin M. Ingersoll is laughing at the wit of some brother member, while extra Billy Smith is dozing quietly in his arm-chair. Tom Benton, the venerable ex-Senator, is engaged in an exciting colloquy with an Ohio Representative about poor, slandered, defamed Fremont, and Hon. Caleb Lyndon, of Lyndonia, the literary representative of the House, is vindicating the claim of Brown, the dragoon of Turkey, to extra compensation. Here are scores of legislators, who year after year have taken a seat in the grand gallery to the last time on a session of the United States Congress; here are men so insignificant as scarcely to deserve a passing notice, that, as years wing their way, will be the cynosure of admiring eyes and the theme of newspaper praise and comment. Standing near the hoary Kentuckian, Lyndon Boyd, is a young man, few years back a humble school-teacher in the mills of Waltham, Mass., and now a Representative from his district, whose name, ere long, will be re-echoed from month to month as the first Republican Speaker, young Nathaniel P. Banks. There, too, is old Joshua Giddings, the lone star of abolition, whose starry form and hair, silvered with the froth of time, was always seen in the front of political battle the tried and intrepid friend of constitutional liberty. The able and accomplished Richard Yates, afterward Senator and Governor of his native State, and Francis B. Cutting, with his tall, commanding figure and aristocratic address, are both men of note, though destined to be pushed into political oblivion by advancing years. There is the little, consequential Charles J. Faulkner, of Virginia, with his choleric son-in-law, Bockock, full of wine and wit, and erratic Judge Cashe, of Richmond, the incarnation of Southern suavity and deceit. Prominent among the representatives of the slave power is a pale, boyish-looking man, whose face, in scornful, scornful face is imprinted the plain, legible history of the future. Alexander H. Stephens, who twenty-five years after was to be wheeled into the House of Representatives the only remaining survivor of the mutations of a quarter-century's time. Cool and wary in council, fearless in debate, sarcastic in scorn, and bitter in reprimand, no man in public or private life was to be more exalted or more beloved.

There is another member, eating an apple—a coarse, large-eyed, broad-faced, somewhat inclined to corpulence, whose history might make a capital romance. John D. Maly, of Wisconsin, five years before had visited Washington as a humble lobbyist, and while staring from behind the green curtain that separated him from the sacred floor, formed the determination of obtaining a seat in Congress. Emigrating to Wisconsin, then almost a wilderness, seen in the front of the country people, and by the judicious exercise of those potent influences familiar only to unscrupulous politicians was elected to the coveted position. Defeated for reelection by Joseph Billmeyer, he was now serving his last term in the Thirty-third Congress and forever bidding adieu to the blunders and enforcements of calumny.

Thomas H. Benton, who had been thirty years in the United States Senate, and remorselessly deprived of a seat he had so long and ably filled by a formidable faction of his own party, had secured a vacant chair in the House, and was with the coming morrow to retire, the last glimpse of the old scenes vanishing from his sight.

Let us not forget in this brief record the brilliant, accomplished, but unfortunate Mike Walsh, who, like others, had failed to obtain a re-nomination, and was drifting out with the coming tide, a few years thenceforth to reach old age and lifeless, in an obscure alley in one of the lowest sections in New York city. We shall never forget the sallies of his pungent humor, his cheerful voice, his eloquence, and his wit. Poor Mike! His only fault was the social glass. He was a good fellow and deserved a better fate. But among all the moving, rest-lag, forms of those 100 odd members there is one whom few know—a silent, grave, almost nose man, with a cunning eye, almost piercing in brightness, a personage hardly known beyond his own district in New York, but who was to play an important role in the world's history, to be courted and feared, wielding power absolute as a despot's, and destined ere many years to close his eyes ignominiously within prison walls, "an unrepentant and unrepentant man," "a few years thenceforth to reach old age and lifeless, in an obscure alley in one of the lowest sections in New York city. We shall never forget the sallies of his pungent humor, his cheerful voice, his eloquence, and his wit. Poor Mike! His only fault was the social glass. He was a good fellow and deserved a better fate. 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